

The Senate Committee on Higher Education offered the following substitute to SB 161:

**A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT**

1 To amend Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, so as to  
2 provide for weighted scores for certain coursework for purposes of determining HOPE  
3 scholarship and Zell Miller scholarship eligibility; to provide for related matters; to provide  
4 for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:**

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to education, is amended in  
8 Code Section 20-2-157, relating to the uniform reporting system for certain purposes and  
9 academic eligibility requirements to receive HOPE scholarships, by revising subsections (b)  
10 and (c) as follows:

11 "(b) Each school system and private school shall adopt the reporting system described in  
12 this subsection for purposes of identifying and qualifying graduating seniors for the HOPE  
13 scholarship program and other programs identified in this Code section:

14 (1) Each school system and private school shall transmit, in a manner and at such times  
15 prescribed by the Georgia Student Finance Commission, an electronic transcript of  
16 courses and course grades for each graduating senior that reflects the complete high  
17 school academic record of the student, including scores on any state tests required for  
18 graduation, the grading scales used by the school system or private school for the time  
19 periods referenced by the transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined  
20 by the Georgia Student Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system  
21 or private school to the commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average  
22 for HOPE scholarship and Zell Miller scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade  
23 earned by the student, with no weighting or addition of points by the local school system  
24 or private school;

25 (2) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for  
26 the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship and Zell Miller

27        scholarship from these electronic transcripts and shall notify students of their eligibility  
28        and high schools as to the eligibility of students;

29        (3) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling as freshmen students in eligible public  
30        or private postsecondary institutions for the first time on May 1, 2007, or thereafter,  
31        except as otherwise provided in paragraph (3.1) of this subsection, the Georgia Student  
32        Finance Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for  
33        the HOPE scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section as follows:

34            (A) For students receiving a college preparatory diploma, each grade for a student in  
35        attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and foreign  
36        language that would, if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement  
37        for the college preparatory curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such  
38        that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0,  
39        and a grade of 'F' = 0; or

40            (B) For students receiving a career/technical diploma, each grade for a student in  
41        attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, and social studies that would,  
42        if successfully completed, satisfy a core graduation requirement for the career/technical  
43        curriculum shall be equated to a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a  
44        grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' = 2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0.

45        Grades for coursework that is classified as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or  
46        international baccalaureate shall be weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance  
47        Commission in calculating the overall grade point averages for students, provided that  
48        the weighting of such course grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state  
49        taking the specified coursework. The grade earned by each student for any such  
50        advanced placement, dual credit, or international baccalaureate course shall be increased  
51        by an additional 0.5 point if such grade is an A, B, C, or D. The sum of the equated  
52        grades shall be divided by the number of course grades, adjusted for term length, to yield  
53        a grade point average on a 4.0 scale;

54            (3.1) For students otherwise qualified and enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time  
55        during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, the Georgia Student Finance  
56        Commission shall calculate grade point averages for determining eligibility for the HOPE  
57        scholarship and other scholarships referenced in this Code section by equating each grade  
58        for a student in attempted coursework in English, mathematics, science, social studies,  
59        and foreign language during the student's ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade year to  
60        a grade on a 4.0 scale, such that a grade of 'A' = 4.0, a grade of 'B' = 3.0, a grade of 'C' =  
61        2.0, a grade of 'D' = 1.0, and a grade of 'F' = 0. Grades for coursework that is classified  
62        as advanced placement, a dual credit course, or international baccalaureate shall be  
63        weighted uniformly by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in calculating the

64 overall grade point averages for students, provided that the weighting of such course  
65 grades is uniformly applied to all students in this state taking the specified coursework.  
66 The grade earned by each student for any such advanced placement, dual credit, or  
67 international baccalaureate course shall be increased by an additional 0.5 point if such  
68 grade is an A, B, C, or D. The sum of the equated grades shall be divided by the number  
69 of course grades, adjusted for term length, to yield a grade point average on a 4.0 scale;  
70 and

71 (4) Qualification for the HOPE scholarship shall be determined from the grade point  
72 average calculated either as set out in paragraph (3) of this subsection or as set out in  
73 paragraph (3.1) of this subsection for students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first  
74 time in a Georgia public school during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter.  
75 Beginning May 1, 2007, students with grade point averages equal to or in excess of 3.0  
76 on the 4.0 scale with a college preparatory diploma shall meet achievement standards for  
77 the HOPE scholarship; students receiving a career/technical diploma shall meet  
78 achievement standards for the HOPE scholarship with a grade point average equal to or  
79 in excess of 3.2 on a 4.0 scale. For students enrolling in the ninth grade for the first time  
80 in a Georgia public school during the 2008-2009 school year and thereafter, such students  
81 with grade point averages equal to or in excess of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale shall meet  
82 achievement standards for the HOPE scholarship. This paragraph shall apply regardless  
83 of when a student graduated from high school and regardless of such student's eligibility  
84 status prior to May 1, 2007.

85 (c)(1) Beginning with the school year beginning after May 1, 2011, each school system  
86 and private school shall adopt the reporting system described in this subsection for  
87 purposes of determining potential eligibility for freshman, sophomore, and junior high  
88 school students for the HOPE scholarship program and other programs identified in this  
89 Code section.

90 (2) Each school system and private school shall transmit to the Georgia Student Finance  
91 Commission, in such a manner and at such times as the commission may prescribe, an  
92 electronic transcript of courses and course grades for each freshman, sophomore, and  
93 junior high school student that reflects the complete high school academic record of the  
94 student, including scores on any state tests required for graduation, the grading scales  
95 used by the school system or private school for the time periods referenced by the  
96 transcripts, and any other pertinent information as determined by the Georgia Student  
97 Finance Commission. Each grade reported by a school system or private school to the  
98 commission for the purpose of calculating the grade point average for potential HOPE  
99 scholarship and Zell Miller scholarship eligibility shall be the actual grade earned by the  
100 student with no weighting or addition of points by the school system or private school.

(3) The Georgia Student Finance Commission shall calculate a grade point average for the purpose of determining eligibility for the HOPE scholarship and Zell Miller scholarship from these electronic transcripts and shall notify students of their potential eligibility and high schools as to the potential eligibility of students."

## SECTION 2.

This Act shall become effective on January 1, 2020.

### SECTION 3.

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.